6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

LANGUAGE AND VOCABULARY

191 The last Caribs in Dominica to speak the native Indian idiom as their mother tongue died some 20 to 25 years ago. But even 60 years ago, at the time of Ober's first visit, the language was employed only by a small minority of older men and women. The urge for economic contacts with the Creole-negro population surrounding them combined, in all probability, with the priests' disapproval of continued isolation of a flock whose conversion was henceforth secure, ended in the adoption of that lingua franca of the West Indies, Creole patois. Those Caribs who today remember some smattering of their fathers' and mothers' tongue regard such knowledge rather in the light of a joke.

[198] Whether the proverbial distinction between the men's and the women's languages persisted to the end is hard to say, but it is certain that some of the words given below belong to the Carib, and others—the majority—to the Arawak stock of languages. Creole patois itself is rich in the debris of many tongues and it is to be hoped that some philologist will soon undertake its excavation.

192 115 The following vocabulary is neither exhaustive of living linguistic vestiges nor is the whole of it necessarily known to any one person now living in the Reserve. My chief informants were: Jimmy (Dordor) Benjamin of Bataka and his brother, Jean Noël (now dead), "Fanfan" and Ma' Bernard of St. Cyr, Lucien of Waïçima, Ma' Henri and her sister Ma' Janney of Bataka, and Choline and Chief Jolly John of Ste. Marie, Salybia. The latter furnished me with the song and some of the words, but was especially helpful in acting as my host, guide, and sponsor in the Reserve.

126 192 The words have been put down as they were given me—in their final form only after hearing them repeated many times by different people. Other vocabularies (in particular that of Father Raymond Breton, published 1665) have been consulted only as a check to word meaning and form. The spelling, as with all unwritten idioms, has been rather a problem. Breton wrote Carib like French, bu tat the best, and apart from the fact that French pronunciation has changed since his time, such a method is clumsy. I very much regret not having had a recording apparatus, but have done my best with the means at my disposal. In general, and taking the following modifications into account, the vowels have been given their Latin values, while the consonants are as in English. Stress is denoted by the apostrophe, as in supplemen'tary.

a, as in father; ao, as in how: ão, as in Portuguese "cão".
ə, an indefinite vowel sound in mother; becomes nasal when final.
ã, as "an" in French; ă, as in cat.
e, as in wet; ẽ, as em (final) in Portuguese.
é, as in French, née.

6: Taylor E-5 (1930-1937) 1938
ST13 Callinago ST13

126 ●
192

i, as in machine; ĭ, as in the Portuguese word "fim".
u, as in French "poule"; ŭ, as "um" in Portuguese.
o, as in not in closed, as (Spanish) no in open syllables.
ô, as "on" in French.
au, eu, ae (but not ai, ay) are disyllabic. Ai, ay, as in fly.
ç, always soft, is intermediate between the s sound in seen and sheen, as in the name of the god Siva; ch as in machine.
hw, more strongly aspirated than English wh; n and r also aspirated when followed by h; whereas gh and kh are soft though distinct gutturals.
p, k, and t often become confused with b, g, and d, as do l with r, ç with ch, long o with u.
ph represents a more explosive sound than that of English f, with something like the trace of a p.
ui, ue, ua (except where there is a stress division, as in u'a) are the same sounds as wi, we, wa, and are pronounced as in wit, wet, wax, etc.

Alternative versions of the Carib are given in brackets.

Where the English equivalent for a Carib word is unknown its patois equivalent is given in parentheses.

192

(C) denotes a word still in local patois usage.
(M) denotes a word of the men's language.
(F) denotes a word of the women's language.

ya'wahu, ya'wa	=bush god or spirit.
ma'phuiya	=devil.
kariphu'nĕ	=carib.
mé'keru	=negro.
ka'buru	=negro-indian mestiso (from Span. cabraĭ).
ankĕli'tsi	=white (Englishman: from Span. Inglese).
huĕ'yu, (hui'yu)	=sun (M).
ka'çi	=sun (F).
nu'nô	=moon.
bi'(rĭ)umô	=star.
waruku'mô	=star.
wa'tu	=fire.
tu'nă	=water.
hu'ya	=rain (F).
kuno'bu	=rain (M).
bara'na	=sea, ocean.
kara'bali	=breese (the trade wind).
iwai'yu hurru'	=storm.

The so-called inseparable pronominal prefixes are, for the men's and for the women's languages respectively:

n-, and l-	=my; w-, or k-	=our.	
b-(p), and a-	=thy; hui-	=your.	
l-	=his		
t-	=her; nh-	=their. Thus:	
nubu'ali		=my husband (lit. head, leader).	
nia'ni		=my wife.	
iba'mui (M)		=my (man speaking) sister's husband.	
buku'çili (F)		=thy father.	
buku'çuru (F)		=thy mother.	
pi'bu ke'hĕ		=thy elder brother.	
limeta'muru		=his father-in-law.	